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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Monday, December 1, 2008

### ***NAPOLITANO JOINS OBAMA ADMINISTRATION***

PHOENIX – Governor Janet Napolitano has accepted an offer from President-elect Barack Obama to become Secretary of the United States Department of Homeland Security.

The Governor has released the following statement:

“I am humbled and honored by President-elect Obama’s invitation, and I am proud to accept it. I believe that when called upon to serve – particularly at such a critical time in the history of our country – it is my duty as a citizen to step forward and say, “Yes.”

“This affirmative answer was, by no means, an easy answer. Over the past six years, together, we have accomplished a great deal in Arizona. My pride in this state, my love for it and my dedication to it will never change.

“Arizona is also facing a time of challenge, and I intend to carry forward with my most important responsibilities as the leader of this state. In just a few weeks, I will deliver my State of the State address, and shortly thereafter, I will present to the Arizona Legislature a balanced budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2010.

“Upon my confirmation as Secretary by the U.S. Senate, I will tender my resignation as Governor of Arizona. Secretary of State Jan Brewer will take over the challenging job as Arizona’s governor during this difficult time, without having sought this office. She will need your support, and I pledge her mine. Specific members of my staff will be designated to oversee the Arizona transition, to ensure that power and responsibility are transferred seamlessly.

“To the people of Arizona I say, “thank you.” You entrusted me to run this state to the best of my ability, and I have tried with all my being to do so. I will continue to work for Arizona and Arizonans, but from a different place and with a different charge.

“In my first inaugural speech, I said, “Our strength lies in our diversity and it lies in our heritage. And we must draw on both of these gifts in the days ahead.” Those words are still true and still useful today. We will face change together, and continue to stand together as “One Arizona.”